DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 330 050 EA 022 760

AUTHOR Duttweiler, Patricia Cloud
TITLE A Look at School-Based Management. Insights on Educational Policy and Practice, Number 6.
INSTITUTION Southwest Educational Development Lab., Austin, Tex.
SPONS AGENCY Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE Jan 89
CONTRACT 400-86-0008
NOTE 6p.
PUB TYPE Collected Works - Serials (022)
JOURNAL CIT Insights on Educational Policy and Practice; n6 Jan 1989

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Administrative Organization; *Decentralization; Educational Administration; Elementary Secondary Education; Institutional Autonomy; Management Systems; School Administration; *School Based Management; *School Restructuring

ABSTRACT

A number of researchers and national commission reports have recommended increased autonomy of public schools through school-site management. School-based management entails focusing the full resources of the system at school level and allowing decisions to be make at that level where faculty and principal constitute a natural management team. Principals act as chief executive officers and the responsibility that they shoulder is matched by an equivalent amount of authority. No one in the central office receives a higher salary than the principal, and teachers are able to earn as mush as their principal. Principal and staff have the authority to make decisions about curriculum and allocation of funds. Central administrators become managers, evaluators, and supporters of the school system instead of bosses and directors while superintendents continue to be chief administrators and responsible to governing boards. (EJS)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

INSIGHTS ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY AND PRACTICE

Number 6 January 1989

A Look At School-Based Management

ED330050

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

✓ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

D. Wilson

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

EA 022 760

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

INSIGHTS ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY AND PRACTICE

Number 6 January 1989

A Look At School-Based Management

A number of researchers and national commission reports have recommended increasing the autonomy of schools within public education. School-based management is one method that shifts authority to make certain decisions from a central entity to the school. School-based management focuses the full resources of the system at the school level and allows decisions to take place at this level. In a self-managing school there is a comprehensive approach to school management that links goal-setting, needs identification, policy-making, planning, budgeting, learning and teaching, and evaluating. Each school becomes a decision-making unit.

Promoting School-Site Management

In *Time for Results: The Governors' 1991 Report on Education* ((NGA, 1986), the National Governors' Association recommended providing incentives and technical assistance to districts to promote school-site improvement. The report argued that:

> providing discretionary resources to schools gives them a major incentive to improve. Where this has been tried, it has unleashed creative energies and helped schools develop a diversity of approaches and strategies to meet particular goals. Among the ways this can be accomplished are to identify and remove legal and organizational barriers to school-site management; to provide technical assistance to encourage local experimentation; to promote school-based budgeting and school-based hiring of teachers; and to provide resources that schools can use at their own discretion.

What is School-Based Management?

School-based management entails focusing the full resources of the system at the school level and allowing decisions to take place at this level (Dade County Public Schools, 1987). School-based management stems from a belief in the individual school as the fundamental decision-making unit within the educational system (Caldwell & Spinks, 1988). The faculty and principal of a school constitute -- or should constitute -- a natural management team.

School-based management differs from most current forms of school district organization in which the central office dominates the decision-making process (Lindelow, 1981). In a self-managing school there is a comprehensive approach to school management that links goal-setting, needs identification, policy-making, planning, budgeting, learning and teaching, and evaluating (Caldwell & Spinks, 1988). School-based management, therefore, is defined generically as a decentralized form of organization in which decisions are made by those who are closest to the source of education: the principal, teachers, parents, community groups, and students. Each school becomes a decision-making unit (Richardson, 1986).

Principals As Chief Executive Officers

If the school is to function as the primary decision-making unit, however, school staff must have the necessary authority to address issues and solve problems. According to Guthrie (1986), such a management transformation is best achieved through: (1) principals who function as chief executive officers, (2) school advisory councils, (3) school-site

Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
211 E. Seventh Street, Austin, Texas 78701 (512) 476-6861

EA 022 760

budgeting and accounting, and (4) annual planning and performance reports. The great responsibility shouldered by the principal is matched by an equivalent measure of authority. With both the responsibility and the authority, the principal is free to become the primary leader of the school (Lindelow, 1981).

Guthrie (1986) asserts that in districts which use a school-based management system, no teacher should be assigned to a school without the principal's approval. He believes it is impractical and unfair to hold staff responsible for the effectiveness of a school if they have no control over who is assigned to that school. In some schools, a committee of teachers interviews applicants and makes recommendations for filling teaching positions (Dade County Public Schools, 1987). In fact, some superintendents are asking teachers to interview prospective principals and to submit recommendations to the superintendent (e.g., Santa Fe, NM).

The 1984 Missouri Conference on Education presented the results from a study of the factors that facilitate or constrain the work of principals. The study found that responsibility without authority and lack of recognition were cited repeatedly by principals as obstacles to effectiveness. The principals expressed frustration with the fact that they were held accountable for expenditures, staff performance, or student achievement without being given the authority needed to discharge their responsibility.

Salary Scales Should Be Realigned

Although sometimes a school may function poorly despite the efforts of an able principal, a school with a weak principal almost never remains effective for very long. For this reason, Guthrie (1986) proposed that, in a school district practicing school-based management, no one in the central office should receive a higher salary than the principals. In addition, the most able teachers in each school should be able to earn as much as their principals. Such a salary structure is seen as one way to curtail the promotion of teachers into central office assignments simply because the classroom affords so few avenues to professional growth, higher salaries, and status.

The importance of recognizing and rewarding effective principals is acknowledged in the report of the National Governors' Association ((NGA, 1986). The report recommends that policy makers devise ways to "reward principals and schools for performance and effectiveness," noting that:

> motivation to improve schools will be greater if there are rewards for success. Principals should be held accountable for school performance, especially if they are given the flexibility and resources to meet the goals set for the school. This can be done in a number of ways. Career ladders for administrators can offer a powerful motivation. States can also reward schools that are making progress toward their goals and publicly acknowledge outstanding school leaders.

School-based management fixes responsibilities where they belong and closes the gap between the authority for initiating and operating school programs and the responsibility for their success or failure (Lindelow, 1981).

School-Based Change -- A Realignment of Responsibilities

Recognizing that educational reform has evolved from "cosmetic changes in course requirements to a radical restructuring of the school environment," the National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration (UCEA, 1987) endorsed school-based change and the realignment of responsibilities that such change would entail.

In those districts where school-based management is being implemented, the extent of teacher involvement varies widely. However, all site-management schools have involved teachers to some extent. Sharing decision-making authority at the school site enables faculty to be personally involved in decisions that directly relate to their day-to-day activities within the school (Lindelow, 1981). Giving faculty members substantial discretion in decision making encourages their productive participation in activities aimed at school reform and develops a sense of partnership or ownership with the school (Guthrie, 1986).

In partnership, the principal and staff in each school should have the authority to make decisions related to curriculum; to the technology of teaching and learning; to the acquisition of materials and the use of facilities and equipment; to the allocation of people in matters associated with teaching and learning; to those aspects of administration, scheduling, teaching, and staff professional development that deal with time; and to the allocation of money (Manz & Sims, 1987).

Changing Roles of Central Office

The relationship between the central office and the school site is considerably changed by the implementation of school-based management. Because the site administrator exercises power and authority that was once the exclusive provence of the central office, central-office administrators' roles change nearly as much as the role of the principal (Lindelow, 1981).

Central administrators become managers of the school system instead of its bosses; they become support and evaluative staff for the schools instead of directors. The central office focuses on facilitating the development of student and staff performance standards; offering technical assistance to schools; locating and providing resource materials; establishing funding formulas; and carrying out system-wide planning, monitoring, and evaluation (Lindelow, 1981).

Superintendents continue to be the chief administrators of districts and the persons responsible to their governing boards for administrative decisions. Experience in districts that have tried school-based management has shown that strong support from the superintendent is absolutely necessary for its proper implementation. Proponents of school-based management say the job at the top is made easier when the entire system becomes more accountable and responsive to client needs. Most of the superintendents involved enthusiastically support the concept once they realize that it can help them meet the responsibilities of their office in a more effective and efficient manner (Lindelow, 1981).

However, changes in the roles of the superintendent, central office staff, principals, and teachers require extensive retraining if the new management system is to survive any real challenge. Otherwise, instead of working with the new system when a crisis arises, everyone will tend to fall back on the workings of the familiar, centralized system and the behaviors that worked for them before (Lindelow, 1981).

Role of the School Board

Support by the school board is vital for successful implementation of school-based management. In a change to school-based management, however, the role of the school board does not change significantly. The board continues to provide general direction for the district by establishing goals and policy statements. In keeping with the philosophy of school-based management, the board should include administrators, teachers, parents, and, where appropriate, students in the formation of district goals. The board monitors the district's progress toward achieving the goals and acts as a decision maker of last resort (Lindelow, 1981).

n

based management is one of the
n organizational structure being
the search for more effective
providing students with oppor-
to achieve success in learning.
ecision making to the school site
the flexibility needed to adjust
; to meet the unique needs of
ool. Coupling the authority to
isions with the responsibility for
ıccess appears to offer a chance
:hool improvement.

References

B. J., & Spinks, J. M. (1988).
managing school. New York:
ess.

ınty Public Schools. (1987, Oc-
School-based management/shared
making. Dade County Public
liami, FL.

.W. (1986). School-based manage-
e next needed education reform.
Kappan, 68 (4), 305-309.

J. (1981). School-based manage-
S.C. Smith, J.A. Mazzarella, &
le (Eds.), *School leadership:*
for survival (pp. 94-129). Eugene,
inghouse on Educational Manage-
versity of Oregon.

Manz, C. C., & Sims, Jr., H. P. (1987, March). Leading workers to lead themselves: The external leadership of self-managing work teams. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 32*(1), 106-129.

NGA. (1986). *Time for results: The Governors' 1991 report on education.* Washington, DC: National Governors' Association.

UCEA. (1987). *Leaders for America's schools: Report of the National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration.* Tempe, AZ: University Council for Educational Administration.

This issue of INSIGHTS was written by Patricia Cloud Duttweiler and is based on research synthesized in the SEDL publications, *Organizing for Excellence* and *Dimensions of Effective Leadership.*

INSIGHTS, *SEDL's update on innovations and emerging topics related to educational policy and practice, is produced by ED-AIDE, a policy information service project, and by Theme C, Improving Teacher and Administrator Performance.*

SEDL | OERI

This publication is based on work sponsored wholly, or in part, by the Office of Educational Research & Improvement, U.S. Department of Education, under Contract Number 400-86-0008. The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of OERI, the Department, or any other agency of the U.S. Government.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE